

Communication Tips on Hearing Loss

Communication is a two-way street so we need our hearing partners do their part!

If both people take responsibility, communication frustrations would be less frequent.

For Hearing People

Rule: Emphasize the visual.

Set Your Stage

- ✓ Get their attention first.
- ✓ Face the person directly.
- ✓ Spotlight your face (no backlighting).
- ✓ Ask what works best for them.

Project Your Communication

- ✓ Don't shout.
- ✓ Speak clearly at a moderate pace.
- ✓ Don't hide your mouth, chew anything or smoke while talking.
- ✓ Rephrase (rather than repeat) if you aren't understood.
- ✓ Use facial expressions and gestures.
- ✓ Give clues when changing the subject.

Establish Empathy

- ✓ Be patient if response seem slow.
- ✓ Stay positive and relaxed.
- ✓ Talk to a hard of hearing person, not around him/her.
- ✓ Offer respect to help build confidence.

For Hard of Hearing People

Rule: Pay attention, do not bluff.

Set Your Stage

- ✓ Tell others how best to talk to you.
- ✓ Pick your best spot (light, quiet, proximity to the speaker).
- ✓ Anticipate difficult situations and plan how best to minimize them.

Project Your Communication

- ✓ Pay attention.
- ✓ Concentrate on the speaker.
- ✓ Look for visual cues.
- ✓ Ask for written cues if needed.
- ✓ Don't interrupt, let the conversation flow awhile to gain more understanding.

Establish Empathy

- ✓ React, let the speaker know how well he is doing.
- ✓ Don't bluff, admit it when you don't understand (prevents trouble later).
- ✓ If too tired to concentrate, ask to have the discussion at another time.